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FESTIVAL

Village green status bid for Shoebury Common

THOUSANDS of Shoeburyness residents are waiting to hear whether an application for village green status has been agreed.

More than 2,500 people have pledged their support in favour of making Shoebury Common a public space protected by law.

The application for village green status is the only one ever to have been received by Southend Council.

Spearheading the campaign for village green status, Peter Lovett told the YA: "I am extremely passionate about getting village green status here."

"I used to play here as a boy, it was out the back gate and on to the common where there were boating lakes and a mini golf course – it was lovely."

"Then I went to work and didn't use it as much."

"But now things have come full circle

and I use it again with my grandchildren."

The land was originally given to the people by Curnel Burgess under the Commons Act in 1895.

Owner of Uncle Tom's Cabin on Shoebury beach, Peter Grubb, said the application stood a good chance.

He said any application had to prove the site had been used by people for pleasure and gatherings for at least 20 years.

He said: "That's the easy bit, we have certainly done that."

The Southend Beach Hut Owners' Association said it did not want village green status because it would mean members would face parking restrictions.

The residents will have to wait for another month for a verdict from Southend Council.

The council had to appoint an independent barrister to look at the application as it owns the land.



HOPEFUL: Peter Lovett wants village green status for Shoeburyness Common

Photo by Mark Cleveland

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Private security plan after neighbourhood policing cuts

By Suzy Muston

southend@yellowad.co.uk

A SOUTHEND councillor wants residents' views on beefing up neighbourhood security with private firms in addition to police.

St Luke's ward Independent councillor Brian Ayling said he wants to

know if families would pay around 50p a week for a security company to provide a rapid response to the first sign of trouble.

Cllr Ayling's idea comes in the wake of Essex Police and Crime Commissioner Nick Alston's plans to slash neighbourhood policing.

Cllr Ayling said: "I want to know

if a definite response was guaranteed, within minutes, how many families in Southend would be prepared to pay a very small sum for this service."

"At the moment, we cannot be sure a 999 call will get an urgent response."

"Cllr Paul Van Looy and I trialled a scheme like this last summer in

Temple Court and Sutton Court high-rise blocks in my ward as they were being used for drug dealing, and it was a resounding success."

"Since then, I've had so many people saying they were delighted to be able to call someone and get an immediate response."

● Turn to page 18

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Adventure Island voted top 3 in UK

SOUTHEND'S Adventure Island has been voted as the third best amusement park in the country and 11th best in Europe.

The figures mean Adventure Island is also ranked in the top one per cent of amusement parks in the world.

Millions of people voted for the park in an industry wide survey because it was 'great value for money' with 'amazingly chirpy staff' without the queues.

The news has reached America and next Tuesday, 171 members of the American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE)

will visit Adventure Island as part a tour tackling the wildest 'scream machines' in the UK.

Adventure Island managing director Marc Miller said: "To be ranked higher in the UK than iconic attractions like Blackpool Pleasure Beach and Brighton Pier is very gratifying.

"We are thrilled the American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE) are coming here.

Blue Peter rated Rage as the most thrilling coaster in Britain. We're looking forward to seeing how ACE members react to it when they arrive."

Top 10 TripAdvisor amusement parks:

- 1 - Alton Towers, Farley
- 2 - Paultons Park, Home of Peppa Pig World, Romsey
- 3 - Adventure Island, Southend-on-Sea
- 4 - Green Wood Forest Park, Y Felinheli
- 5 - Pleasure Beach, Blackpool Drayton Manor, Tamworth
- 6 - Sundown Adventureland, Retford
- 7 - The Milky Way Adventure Park, Clovelly
- 8 - Drayton Manor Park, Tamworth
- 9 - Brighton Pier, Brighton
- 10 - Fishers farm Park, Wisborough Green

TOP: Rage has been rated the best



SOUTHEND sea life centre is teeming with life after a baby boom.

Hundreds of infant seahorses, pipefish, goodeids and azolots are floating around the seafront aquarium.

Staff say they expect an increase in visitors following the piscine baby boom.

YOUNG: A baby seahorse

Photo Mark Cleveland



Sealife centre enjoys baby boom

What do you think? Write to Yellow Advertiser, Acorn House, Great Oaks, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1AH, or e-mail letters@yellowad.co.uk

> speedread

● RNLI crews had to rescue crew from a boat that struck Southend pier on Sunday.

The RNLI said a catamaran which had two people on board hit the pier at around 6pm.

Crews from the charity's offshore lifeboat station at the end of the pier rescued crew and craft which had become stuck because the tide was going out.

Den Freeman from the RNLI said crews used the Atlantic 75 vessel for the rescue operation.

Crews fixed a tow line to the catamaran and towed it back to the Thames Estuary Yacht Club.

Mr Freeman said: "With the ebbing tide the catamaran was unable to be taken all the way back to Smallgains in Canvey so assistance was given by our friends at the Thames Estuary Yacht Club."

● SOUTHEND'S county and family court will move to the crown and magistrates court under sweeping government reforms.

The county and family court, currently in Tylers Avenue, Southend, is set to move to the crown and magistrates court building in Victoria Avenue. The county and family court covers issues such as adoption, bankruptcy, children, divorce, domestic violence, forced marriage, housing possession and money claims. Southend could also take on family and tribunal matters that were dealt with in Acorn House, Basildon.

To take part in the consultation, email estatesconsultation@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

The response to the consultation exercise can be viewed at www.gsi.uk/moj

● A NEW report sets out standards ambulance staff are expected to reach. The East of England Ambulance Trust NHS Trust (EEAST) Quality Account for 2014/15 highlights clinical priorities for the coming year. In 2015/16, the Trust will focus on the same seven key areas to raise standards.

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friends at The Liberty are offering one lucky reader and a friend the chance to be centre stage at Virgin Media's V Festival at Hylands Park, Chelmsford, on Saturday, August 22.

Bringing the UK's festival season to a close with a star-studded line-up boasting some of the biggest names in music, Saturday's performances include headliners Kasabian, Sam Smith, The Courteeners, Olly Murs, Chvrches and Sir Tom Jones, along with many, many more.

For more information on Superhero Summer at The Liberty visit: www.theliberty.co.uk/superhero-summer.

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NEWS

Pair hope to cycle to Paris in aid of charitable cause

Rugby duo kick off bike-a-thon

A KIND-HEARTED Westcliff dad and his pal are cycling to Paris to raise money for charity.

Charlie Keenan, 38, and Dan Rosewell, 39, were due to set off on their epic journey on Wednesday.

Charlie and Dan are raising money for a charity called the Encapolitis Society that helps sufferers with encapolitis, a swelling of the brain caused by either measles or chickenpox.

Dad-of-three Charlie said: "My buddy's sister was getting very poorly and no one knew what the problem was with her.

"It was a mystery for years, then she went into a coma. She is close to our hearts. Dan does everything for everyone else so I wanted to help him."

Charlie is an ex-Southend rugby player and Dan still plays. The pair vary their cycles to keep things fresh.

He added: "We are both big lads, so hills aren't usually our friends. We cycle through Hockley, Rayleigh, and out to Little Baddow."

The cyclists will arrive in Dover tonight having covered an exhausting 85 miles. On Thursday they will cycle 95 miles to Amiens, France, then on day three 60 miles to Creil. On day four they cycle 50 miles to Paris. To sponsor them justgiving.com/charlie-keenan and justgiving.com/danielrosewell



KIND: Charlie Kennan and Dan Rosewell cycling to Paris
Photo Mark Cleveland

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Time to join the carnival

Community groups' chance to take part in procession and raise funds



THAT RIO FEELING: Organisers want to repeat the success of previous carnivals where 20,000 people flocked to Southend seafront

By Suzi Muston

southend@yellowad.co.uk

SOUTHEND groups and organisations are invited to join the town's carnival procession.

Around 20,000 people are expected to flock to the seafront on Saturday August 22.

Carnival organisers said the procession was a great chance to get involved with the local community.

Anyone who takes part will be able to select a charity of their choice and raise money from the crowd along the way.

Carnival marketing manager James Harrison said: "Whether you are a business, club, school, group of friends or organisation, it is fantastic fun for everyone who takes part."

"Last year, more than £6,000 was raised for charity."

Last year, Southend RNLI headed

up the procession. RNLI officer, Den Freeman told the YA: "We were amazed, the carnival organisers put us right at the front."

"Everyone knows we don't get any government money. We were so grateful to all those who donated, we did really well."

"We have a great team spirit at Southend lifeboat station, but the carnival brings out the best of this."

"All of us that took part had a lot of

fun and enjoyed talking to the crowds that lined the procession."

Southend RNLI will be entering again and already have big plans for their float.

Each year there is a competition for the best float. Last year, it was won by Genting Club, Westcliff, for their Mad Hatters Tea Party theme with characters from Alice in Wonderland.

For more, email southendcarnival.org.uk



► speedread

ATTEMPTS at directing patients away from Southend Hospital's A&E department have failed according to NHS chiefs.

The department sees almost 2,500 patients with minor ailments each month despite attempts to redirect patients to other medical outlets.

NHS chiefs want to relocate A&E alternatives such as walk in centres to the hospital site, rather than away from it.

NHS Southend Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) examined the way St Luke's walk in service Pantile Avenue, was used and said the findings reflect a national picture.

Melanie Craig, NHS Southend CCG chief officer said: "This new service will focus on patients who attend A&E with an urgent minor ailment or condition that can be seen by a GP or nurse to free up capacity in A&E."

YOUNGSTERS between 13 and 17 who are interested in policing can join a new Southend scheme.

Essex Police want to recruit 25 cadets, in September, to help them develop qualifications and confidence.

Southend PC Mike Burrill said: "Priority will be given to those who are vulnerable to crime or social exclusion and may benefit from the opportunities most."

Contact volunteer.police.cadets@essex.pnn.police.uk

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Summertime blues for homeless

A shortage in food donations and an increase in destitute teens forced to camp on the cliffs are just two problems facing local charities, as SUZI MUSTON reports

A CENTRE that helps the homeless get back on their feet need food donations.

The Homeless Action Resource Project, Harp, in York Road, Southend, provides food, shelter, vocational training, medical facilities and counselling for addictions to alcohol and drugs.

Manager Gary Turner told the YA, food donations were prone to "seasonal fluctuations". He said: "This time of year is a quiet period and donations are low. Normally the best time for us is harvest festival and Christmas.

"Right now people are thinking about their summer holidays and children are breaking up from school so families have a lot on.

"At the moment the shed we keep our food in has a lot of empty shelves.

"We need fruit and vegetables, which we can freeze, so that people get the right kind of vitamins and minerals.

"We also need other staples such as pies and beans and not really the things people have at the back of their cupboard such as anchovies!"

Although Harp is not a soup kitchen, food is used as an incentive get people into use their services.

Mr Turner added: "If people have not had a good meal or their lifestyle



STOCKS ARE LOW: Harp team Neal Mcardle and Gordon Maxwell
Photo by Mark Cleveland

has not been very healthy, a good meal can be very beneficial in lots of ways. Food is a great incentive to get people in through the door, but we really need some donations right now."

If you can spare a tin or two, then either call Harp on 01702 430696 or drop it off at their premises at 103-107 York Rd, Southend-on-Sea.

Teens on the cliffs is increasing problem

HOMELESS charities across Southend have seen an increase in the number of teenagers using their services.

The YA spotted scores of colourful tents, thought to be day-trippers, pitched on the cliffs near the seafront, but discovered that they are being lived in by homeless people.

One of the charities helping the homeless is the Storehouse charity in Coleman Street.

Manager Rob Carvosso said part of the

reason for the increase in youngsters using the service was due to government changes in housing benefit for single people.

He said: "Youngsters are falling through the gaps. We are already seeing the impact of housing benefit cuts for single people.

"If people can't prove they have applied for work their benefits are stopped so they come to us for food.

"There has been an increase in this age group as well as men in their mid forties.

"A lot of people just come to the end of the road with their mental health and don't wish to engage with the services and the system."

The soup kitchen, Soup4Southend said they too had seen an increase in the number of people under 35 using their service from around 10 to at least 50.

Homeless Action Resource Project, (Harp) said it too had seen an increase in numbers.

It said homeless people cannot get benefits because they don't have homes and they can't get homes as they don't get benefits.

Harp will be opening a refurbished hostel on Thursday. For details see next week's YA.

A spokesman for Southend Council said: "The council only passes on benefits from the Government."

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Memory garden gates are open

By Suzi Muston

southend@yellowad.co.uk

A GARDEN designed to help people living with dementia is open for the summer season.

The site at St Martin's care home, Imperial Avenue, Westcliff was designed to help trigger memories and stimulate the senses with floral fragrances and colours.

It was created using research from the King's Fund health charity which examines how sights and sounds can activate the long term memory.

The garden also includes a yellow path in a figure of eight, a bus stop and a postbox.

It was designed by Chelsea Gold medal winner, Sean Butler, who created the "walkway to a long-life dementia garden".

He was given a helping hand from staff and residents at the care home.

Manager Jackie Lim said the residents loved smelling the flowers, listening to the birds and identifying them using a wildlife board.

Jackie said: "We have tables, chairs, seated areas for wheelchair users.

"It's great for the residents visiting because it really is like coming to a cafe, it is not at all depressing.

"The bus stop is useful because it reminds people of their past and triggers memories. One lady loves it because her husband was a bus driver.

"The figure eight pathway was created in yellow because yellow is the last colour to go."

Jackie said the residents liked to see other members of the community use the garden.

She added: "Various groups such as the Alzheimer's Society come here and use the garden.

"It's nice because the garden is for the community to use. The more people who use the garden



HAVING FUN: Michelle Roger and Millie Johnson

Photo by Steve O'Connell

the better, it's more for our clients to look at." The garden was created last year after Southend's Darby and Joan Club and Southend Council applied for £270,000 funding to the Department of Health.

Research by the King's Fund shows 40 per cent of people over 65 in general hospitals will be living with dementia and most living in care homes have dementia or cognitive problems.

The garden is open to visitors on the third Thursday of the month from 1-4pm (appointment only.) Refreshments can be provided. If you run a group and want to visit, call Jackie on 01702 475891.

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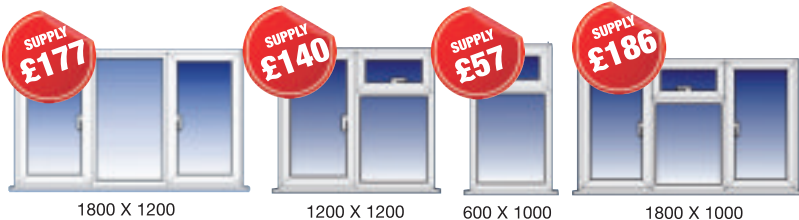
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NEWS

Crossing their green fingers

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Photo by Mark
Cleveland



RESIDENTS and staff at a care home in Manchester Drive, Southend, are crossing their fingers after entering a national gardening competition.

Judges from Hallmark in Bloom visited Admiral Court home on Monday.

The home narrowly missed out on an award in the competition last year.

Hallmark Care Homes managing director Avnish Goyal said the gardens had significantly improved. "This year the home has built an allotment from scratch. They are growing fruit and vegetables – some of which I have never heard of and they are using the produce in the home."

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Council committee to study debt

I AM pleased to say that the Policy Scrutiny has chosen the issue of debt to study for this civic year.

While the detail is to be settled, it will want to highlight the pitfalls of debt and methods or strategy for dealing with it, but will also bring as many of those who can help residents to cope to a forum.

Individual cases will be looked at by the specialists not by the study group.

Councillors David Garston, Cheryl Nevin and Judith McMahon are enthusiastic supporters of the project.

Cllr Mark Flewitt
Leigh ion Sea

Come up with some incentives

THE Victoria Shopping Centre in Southend was renovated a few years ago and as part of this work they moved the toilets from the Deeping to the first floor.

The centre's toilets went from being the scruffiest in Southend to the best. I am please to see the standard has been maintained and they are probably the best public toilets in Essex.

If they haven't already received an award they certain-

ly deserve one. It's just a pity that there are still so many empty shops in the centre, particularly on the first floor.

When you consider how nice the centre is now you would have thought they would be snapped up. Could it be they are asking too much for the rents? Maybe they should be offering an incentive, say six months rent-free?

Maybe they could also be council tax-free for six months?

It would certainly be better than leaving them empty and bringing in no money.

Alan James
Hockley

UKIP split is a cunning plan

SO the warring factions of the UKIP group at Basildon Council have decided to split into two separate groups, which comes as no surprise to those involved in local politics.

The official UKIP group it seems now comprises of eight Basildon councillors and the other party is three Wickford UKIP members.

Although they are two separate groups it seems, they are as one, only the purpose of splitting is to gerrymander with the hope of achieving more committee places between them and so apparently the Wickford UKIP members can concentrate their efforts on affairs in Wickford.

So to recap, they are now

two separate groups, but they are all UKIP.

Looking deeper, it is well known there has been tremendous animosity within the UKIP group in Basildon Council with a deep resentment between some of its members.

Part of the reason for the split is to keep the warring factions apart, namely the Wickford ones and the Basildon ones.

However, there are also two underlying "cunning plans".

Firstly, for the UKIP members so that they can try to get an advantage in seats as two combined groups. Secondly, and politically even more interesting, is that the continuing demise of UKIP as a political force means that those current Wickford UKIP members may find it harder to retain their seats when the next elections come up.

This disingenuous statement about looking after Wickford; while I am sure they are, because this is the duty of each member to represent their ward, Wickford is just cover for the fact that they may have used UKIP as a vehicle in order to get elected as they had failed to be able to do this standing as Independents.

Thus putting the Wickford bit in front of UKIP is designed to give them more credibility.

There is absolutely no reason why the Wickford councillors can be any more or less efficient concentrating on Wickford by just calling themselves Wickford UKIP. It is, as I said, disingenuous to say so. What will happen, when it

comes to their elections in Wickford? Will the Wickford UKIP candidates be allowed to adopt the official UKIP title and logo? Will UKIP headquarters decide that this is not an acceptable deviation?

And, what would happen for instance if other groups decided to split into Basildon, Billericay and Wickford, yet claimed to be the same, but demanded individual party recognition as separate groups, yet in reality be the same party? Anarchy would prevail.

This latest UKIP fiasco is gerrymandering and dishonesty of the worse kind, for which I am sure will lead to a continuation of the demise of UKIP as people realise what a rag-tag and bobtail party they are.

Danny Lovey
Langdon Hills,
Basildon

Make a stand for safety

SO the PCC has bottled it and is off at the end of his tenure.

Just as well as he hasn't achieved much except holding mostly meaningless meetings and collecting data which, despite glaring, obvious problems, he has failed to strenuously act upon.

It is well documented that Nick Alston (and Essex Police) simply "monitors" the deaths, rapes, assaults, etc, caused because of ECC's policy of switching off road lights between 1am and 5am.

Both he and Essex Police are fully aware not only of deaths and crime in Essex, but the road deaths in other counties.

At least six of the latter, according to the AA and RAC, have officially been blamed by coroners on this lethal part-night lighting.

When is he, with the chief constable, going to stand up for the safety and security of residents and loudly condemn the night time switch off?

The "monitoring" has already been done for them by other counties – pitch dark streets allow assaults to take place.

Enough talkies, let's have some walkies.

Fred Dunn,
Vange

Street wise

REGARDING "Court setback for residents fighting to keep addresses."

I can't imagine what planet Cllr Phil Turner is living on.

He talks about emergency services getting lost and not being able to find an address, resulting perhaps in someone dying.

Well, they've been managing quite well for the five years or so since the regeneration was completed, despite the appalling lack of signage so what's the problem now?

The council claims that the renaming will improve the image of the estate by getting rid of the names associated with the estate's "Alcatraz" nickname, yet significantly, Mellow Purgess Close and Mellow Purgess End are not going to be renamed – how inconsistent.

Cllr Frank Ferguson
Lee Chapel North Ward
Basildon Borough Council



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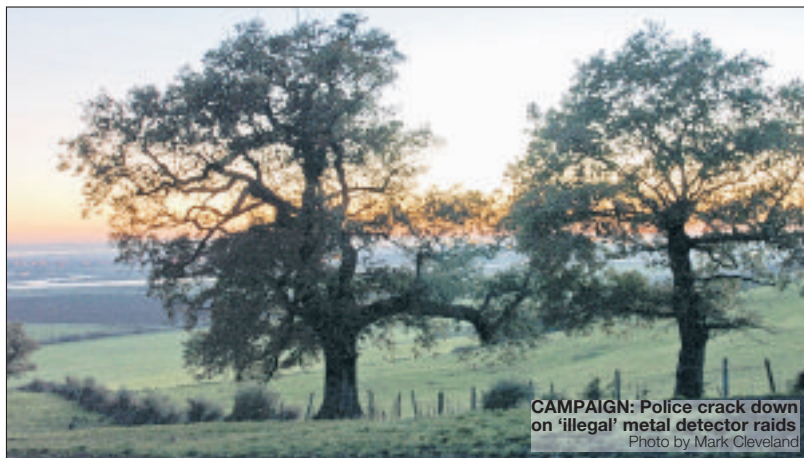
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Clampdown on illegal metal detectors searching countryside



CAMPAIGN: Police crack down on 'illegal' metal detector raids
Photo by Mark Cleveland

Police unit warns 'treasure hunters'

PEOPLE who use metal detectors to search for historic treasures are to be targeted by Essex Police from this week.

Operation Chronos will employ a specialist unit to work with Historic England and others to urge land owners to report the practice, known as 'nighthawking'.

This is where people go on to farmland, archaeological sites and other areas of interest to

find and remove coins and other artefacts without permission.

Essex Police said the practice can 'damage farmland, disturb wildlife and destroy archaeological sites'.

Nighthawkers will enter land usually at night. Finds removed by them whilst trespassing may amount to theft, and can lead to historic data being lost for good.

Assistant chief constable Julia Wortley, Essex Police,

lead on territorial policing, said she would work to crack down on thieves. She warned: "So-called nighthawkers might think they're no different to people who go metal-detecting for a hobby. But their actions damage the countryside, threaten our heritage and lead to the loss of important and invaluable national artefacts simply to satisfy the greed of a small group of criminals."

What do you think? Write to Readers' Letters, Yellow Advertiser, Acorn House, Great Oaks, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1AH, or e-mail letters@yellowad.co.uk

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Police chief quits for family

By Charles Thomson

basildon@yellowad.co.uk

POLICE Commissioner Nick Alston is retiring from public office – to focus on his singing.

The Tory police and crime boss for Essex announced at a press conference on Tuesday that he would step down next May without seeking a second term in office.

In an exclusive interview with the YA after the announcement, Mr Alston, 64, said he took three months to decide he would not stand for re-election, but did so in order to hone other skills, including music, and spending more time with his family.

He claimed the commissioner role, which he was the first to be elected to in Essex in November 2012, did not provide a good work-life balance and he had little opportunity to indulge hobbies.

He said: "I found it a really difficult decision to take. I said originally I would take the decision by Easter but I didn't. It was June.

"It's not to do with the job. I had cancer back in

2009 and as far as I'm concerned I'm free of cancer, but when you go through a critical illness you have to think really hard about the future.

"The family actually are a really important factor. Being able to look after the kids is important for me. I've worked for 40 years and those things do matter. And I have lots of other interests. I'm on the board of Broomfield Hospital.

"There are various things I care about. I'm very involved with church life. I run a musical charity. I sing. I've got other skills. I'm quite good at singing. So I don't have a chance to use those talents

I haven't even launched my boat this year and you know, these things matter.

"If you haven't got balance then you're not going to do a good job.

"And the fact is, the idea of working – and I can only work in one way; you turn me on and I go – the notion of doing that until I'm 68 just doesn't feel right."

Chief Constable Stephen Kavanagh paid tribute to Mr Alston, who he said had "improved transparency".

He said: "Nick's tenacity in scrutinising the force is complemented by the time he takes to



QUITTING: Nick Alston made his announcement at a press conference

and listen to officers of all ranks and communities from all backgrounds across the county.

"Nick's commitment to public service, intellect and deep-seated values have made a real contribution to our county. Personally, I am extremely grateful for his advice and challenge and I look forward to working with him and his team on the big issues facing crime and policing in Essex until his retirement."

Wrong arm of the law...

MORE THAN 400 complaints were made against Essex Police in the first quarter of 2015, a report has revealed.

Papers published by Police Commissioner Nick Alston showed that between January and March the force received 415 complaints, of which 380 were against officers and 35 were against staff.

They included one allegation of sexual assault by a police officer, 24 allegations of assault by an officer, seven complaints about alleged discrimination, four reports of alleged "perjury or irregularity in evidence" and eight claims that

people's data had been improperly released.

One officer was sacked and submitted for inclusion on a list banning him from serving again, after he was convicted for refusing to provide a specimen.

Two more were fired after a gross misconduct hearing determined they had made false entries in a domestic violence report.

Another is to be probed over alleged "inappropriate contact with vulnerable females".

A Special Chief Inspector is under investigation for allegedly "verbally abusing members of the public".

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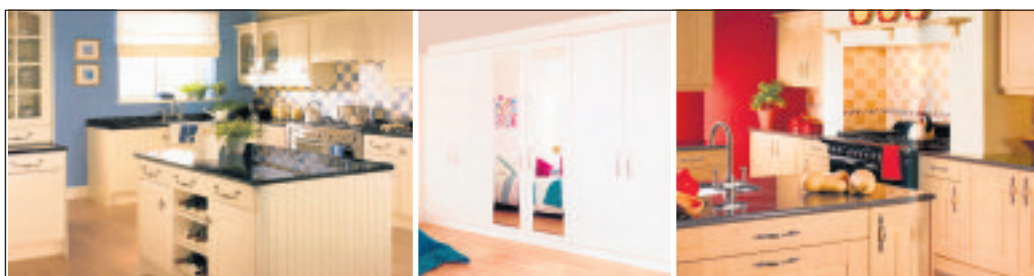
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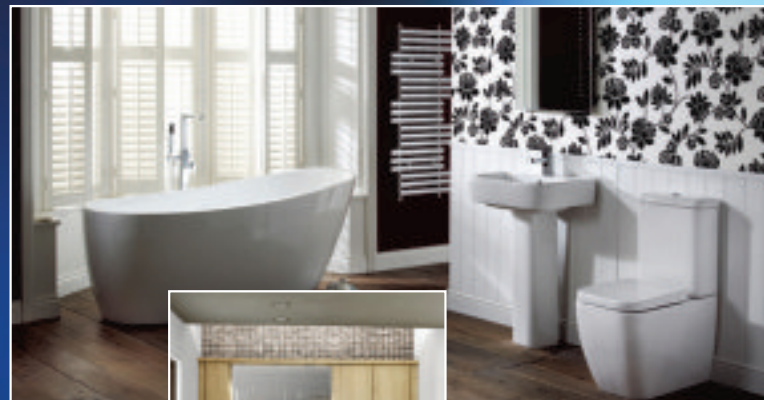
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Beat bobbies row

POLICE and crime commissioner for Essex Nick Alston was wrong to say bobbies on the beat have no place in the force, according to a local councillor.

Independent Councillor Brian Ayling, of St Luke's ward, Southend, said visible police officers were a vital tool in combatting crime.

Mr Alston made the comments during an announcement he was to stand down next year as the county's police and crime commissioner. Mr Alston said "bobbies on the beat were a luxury the UK could no longer afford."

Mr Alston, chairman of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, insists bobbies impact on slashing crime figures was "completely unproven".

Councillor Ayling said the comments were

thoughtless. He said: "Sometimes, these people at the top have no idea of what happens on the ground. It has been proven that even PCSOs have a real role in identifying local crime problems and bobbies on the beat has worked for more than 100 years."

Shadow policing minister, Jack Dromey, told the YA that community police were more crucial now than ever before.

He said: "It would be utterly mad to take away neighbourhood policing. These are dangerous times with terrorism posing a real threat."

National Police Chiefs' Lead on Local Policing, Chief Constable Simon Cole, insisted that focussed, local problem-solving worked.

● **What do you think? Send your thoughts to southend@yellowad.co.uk**

Security idea 'to aid police'

From front page

Cllr Ayling asked Nick Alston if he had any objection to the authority providing a security service.

Cllr Ayling said: "He said he did not object at all. I've got it all in writing."

"This won't be easy to get off the ground, but it's something we need to think about."

"Nick Alston wants to increase council tax to pay for better policing but I am afraid the money will go to maintain highly paid police upper management and not for personnel

on the ground." Last week Essex Police received around 750 emergency calls to 999 and around 1,000 to its 101 number each day.

Although Southend district commander, Chief Inspector Simon Anslow did not wish to be drawn on the issue of extra policing, he did say he "understood the distress that people can feel when they sometimes have to wait for a response".

He added: "We have a limited number of officers and they must focus on the issues that present the greatest risk to people.

We are being proactive in our policing of gang-related drug dealing, in our efforts to prevent violence during our night time economy, in preventing domestic abuse and in identifying children at risk of sexual exploitation.

"This is where I will continue to prioritise my officers' time and we will get to them but inevitably the most serious threats to people must be dealt with first."

● **What do you think? Send your thoughts to letters@yellowad.co.uk**






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Cleverly designed to maximise space and light, each home has spacious, warm, living areas and four double bedrooms, the master with an en-suite.

Equal consideration has been given to the final specification, with each property coming with Velfac windows, traditional detailing, pristine communal landscaping, private gardens by Planit Landscape Architects and a 10-year NHBC-backed guarantee. (The images shown are generic and do not refer to a particular property).

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approached via double opening iron gates and benefits from two and a half acres of beautifully maintained gardens a double cart lodge, fish pond, swimming pool. 3 bedrooms with one en suite and a walk in wardrobe, a lounge and dining room, a modern fitted kitchen a UPVC double glazed conservatory.



Ashtree Court £274,995

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Assandune Close £330,000

3 bed semi chalet a white high gloss kitchen with some integrated appliances that is open plan onto the dining area. There is a family bathroom and an open plan living space which includes 20' lounge with bi-fold doors opening onto garden which is wedge shaped and measures 90' x 72' max. There is also a brick built garage.



Thorpe Hall Avenue £569,995

3 double bedroom detached GOLDSWORTHY built bungalow. Features include, Master bedroom en suite, large open plan Kitchen/Living area, separate Utility Room, family bathroom, double glazing and central heating



Parklands £274,995

3 bed semi detached bungalow located on the popular Holt Farm Development. The property benefits from a modern fitted kitchen, lean to conservatory leading to a garage measuring 19'3" with a separate storage area, a lounge leading to a dining room, a shower room, double glazing and off road parking.

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Abbots Close £245,000

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The Gables £389,995

4 bed detached 20' spacious lounge/diner, a well fitted kitchen/ breakfast room with some integrated appliances, a UPVC double glazed conservatory, en suite shower room to the master bedroom and a bathroom, landscaped rear garden and an attached garage with a drive which provides off street parking.



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Norman House £825 pcm

2 bed ground floor apartment has the advantage of a white high gloss modern fitted kitchen with integrated appliances and a modern contemporary white bathroom suite. The property benefits from an allocated parking space and communal gardens.



Southend Road £1,100 pcm

3 bedroom semi detached house offering spacious accommodation to include a 15' x 11'9" Max L shaped kitchen diner, a 20'3" lounge / diner, a spacious reception hall, off road parking for several vehicles, gas central heating, double glazing and no onward chain. Working applicants only, no smokers, no pets. Available Now.



Elizabeth House £950 pcm

A spacious penthouse positioned within a recently built development development located in the heart of Rochford. The property benefits from two double bedrooms, 2 allocated parking spaces, a modern fitted kitchen and bathroom as well as an en-suite to the master bedroom.



Dorset Gardens £1100

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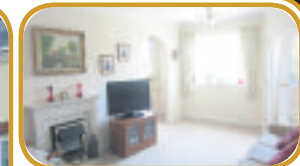


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Southend On Sea £775,000



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Westcliff On Sea £325,000



Sorrell are favoured with instructions to offer for sale this spacious three double bedroom detached family house situated on a good size plot. The property provides large ground floor living accommodation and benefits from being newly carpeted and decorated throughout. Full double glazing and gas central heating and has scope to extend due to the size of its frontage. West backing garden. Offers early vacant possession.

Benfleet £92,000



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Hadleigh £700 pcm



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Guide Price: £290,000 - £295,000

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FOURTH AVENUE, KINGSLEIGH PARK

£155,000

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Ask the Agent

Alan Kirkman

Q. Will installing solar PV panels increase the market value of my home?

A. From the wording of your question, I'm guessing that you are looking to sell pretty soon – in which case, the short answer is No!

There are two main reasons for this: 1) you won't recover the full cost when you sell, and 2) whatever the solar companies may tell you, a lot of people simply don't like the look of them!

First, the cost. It is an unwritten law of the property market that if you are looking to sell, it is simply not worth investing in any costly home improvements. Spending, say, £20,000 on a new roof or double glazing does not suddenly make your home worth £20,000 more than it was.

That's all very well, you might argue. But solar panels are different, surely? After all, what about all these schemes that offer free panels?

Well, as it happens, those very schemes are a persistent source of concern to the property industry – particularly the RICS,



Alan Kirkman is a Director of both Tudor Estates in Southend and Essex TEAM part of a network of independently owned estate agents who share their instructions for the benefit of giving their client properties maximum market exposure. Alan has been an estate agent for over 32 years.

the Law Society and the Council of Mortgage Lenders. By signing up to one of them, you may not only have unwittingly violated the terms of your own mortgage agreement, but actually made your home less saleable to boot! Why is that? Basically because potential buyers and lenders alike tend to take a rather dim view of properties where someone else effectively owns the roof! Besides, many buyers simply won't like the idea of being tied into a contract that you chose to sign.

As for my claim that a lot of people simply don't like solar panels, all I can say is that I encounter that view all the time – and so does every other estate agent I know. Sure, it's a matter of personal taste, and perhaps a time may come when those who find solar panels all over the roof aesthetically pleasing are in a majority. But at the moment, they aren't. Besides, just think. If you are really serious about selling your home, why run the risk of alienating as many prospective buyers as you attract – if not more?

So, my advice is this. If you're staying put for a few years, and the prospect of enjoying cheaper electricity for that time is sufficiently attractive, then go ahead – as long as you are able to buy the system outright. But, if you're planning to sell, I would definitely save your money!

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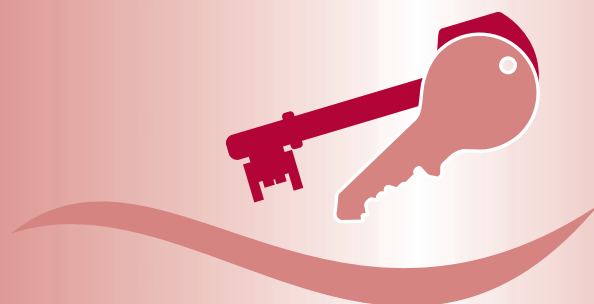
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Southend-on-Sea £299,995

Overlooking Jones Memorial Park and with a south facing garden is this four bedroom, three reception room detached house benefitting from a large workshop to the rear which could be converted into an annexe with the right planning approval. Easy access to all transport links, schools and town centre. EPC: F



Cliffdown Conservation Area £410,000

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Westcliff-on-Sea £139,995

Two bedroom ground floor flat situated in an imposing building within walking distance of seafront, Hamlet Court Road shopping centre and Westcliff railway station. Lounge. Bathroom/v.c. Kitchen. Gas central heating. Double glazing. Allocated parking space. 99 year lease. No onward chain. EPC: D



Cliffdown Conservation Area £139,950

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Southend-on-Sea £159,995

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Royal Terrace O.I.E.O £700,000

Twelve bedroom registered guesthouse. Grade 2 listed Georgian terrace. Established family business trading 20 years. Owner's accommodation. Owner's parking permit available. Three star AA Registered. Passed recent fire regulations. Audited accounts available. EPC: C



Barling Magna £314,950

Deceptively spacious two bedroom semi-detached cottage style character bungalow situated in a prestigious village location. Lounge with red brick fireplace and dining area. Family room. Kitchen. Bathroom/v.c. Cottage style internal doors and beams throughout. Useful outbuilding and south facing rear garden. Off-road parking for three cars. No onward chain. EPC: E



Westcliff-on-Sea £75,000

Extremely well presented one bedroom retirement apartment located close to Westcliff seafront. Lounge 14' x 12'. Kitchen. Bedroom with built-in wardrobes. Recently installed shower room. Security entry system. Many communal facilities. Communal car park for residents and visitors parking. 24 hour emergency call service. Lifts to all floors. EPC: C

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RETREAT ROAD - £525 pcm

Large first floor flat located close to Westcliff railway station and Hamlet Court Road shops benefitting from a large lounge, fitted kitchen, dining room, double bedroom, bathroom, shower room, double glazed front door. Central heating. Garden. AVAILABLE MID AUGUST. UNFURNISHED. NO PETS. EPC: D. Admin fee £180 per adult



MESS ROAD - £500 pcm

Self-contained ONE double bedroom first floor flat located close to local shops and seafront. Lounge. Fitted kitchen with cooker. Part. Double. Glazed. front door. AVAILABLE NOW. UNFURNISHED. NO PETS. EPC: G. Admin fee £150 per adult



LANCASTER GARDENS - £550 pcm

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HARTINGTON ROAD - £525 pcm

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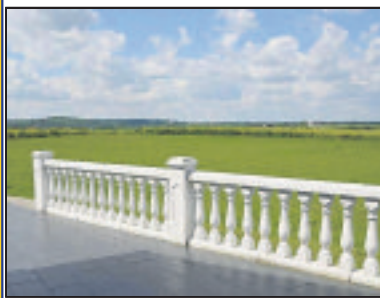
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Town & Country

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Westcliff on sea £349,995

Internal viewing is essential to fully appreciate this exceptional semi detached house situated on the eagerly sought after Somerset Estate within easy access of the a127, Southend airport, shops and schools at Earls hall, St. Thomas More , Westcliff and Southend High Schools & Southend hospital. Stunning interior with superb lounge, separate dining room, luxury kitchen and bathroom. South facing garden. Ref etl5343

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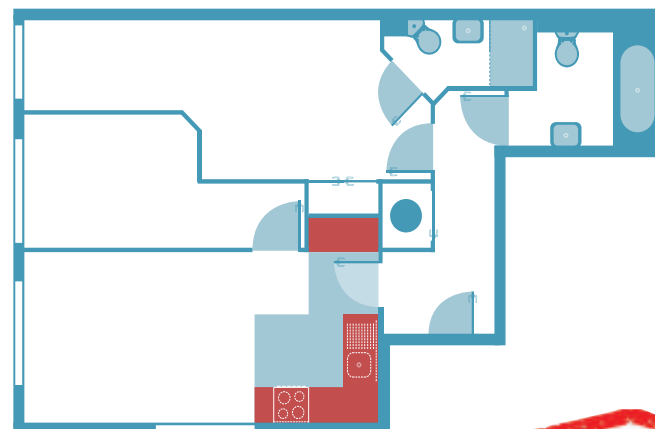


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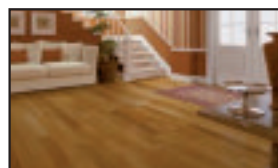
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PrimeTime

What's on and what's coming

Craig revels in villainy

By **LIZ WADE**

STRICTLY star Craig Revel Horwood likes nothing better than playing the bad guy – or girl – and his next appearance at the Cliffs Pavilion looks to be equally as evil.

Back in 2013, the star of television and stage donned a dress and hit the Southend theatre's stage as the Wicked Queen in *Sleeping Beauty*. Fast forward more than 18 months and he is now perfecting his wig, heels, dress and make-up to play the role of another nasty lady, Miss Hannigan, in the new production of *Annie*.

Talking just before the show's debut at the Theatre Royal in Newcastle earlier this month, Craig said: "I'm very nervous today, we haven't tried the make-up yet."

"It's been a bit of a slog learning the American accent, but I'm sure it will all be fine."

"I love playing villains, they are much more interesting. This role is quite different, she's an alcoholic who hates children. I can't come out of character like I can in other characters. It's much more interesting playing the villain and much more fun."

But playing a female role and learning a New York accent have not been the only challenges of his latest role as Craig and his fellow cast members and production team have had to work with three different groups of children who will be joining them on stage at different locations across the country.

"We have had a month's rehearsals with three sets of children and three Annies, so we have had to do things three times," says Craig. "They all act differently so you have to act differently too."

"It was quite daunting on the first day as everyone was there including all the children, and we had to do a read through and I felt really nervous."

"You get to know all the child actors and they act fantastically. They say never work with children and dogs, well just the one dog. The dog is called Amber but she has learnt to respond to Sandy. The dog is doing really well, she's so well trained."

This new production, which has begun a year-long tour and will be at the Cliffs Pavilion, Southend, from Monday to Saturday, August 3-8, brings the story of *Annie* to life once again. Set in 1930s New York during The Great Depression, brave young Annie is forced to live a life of misery and torment at Miss Hannigan's orphanage.

● Turn to page 38



SMART MOVE: Craig Revel Horwood stars as Miss Hannigan in *Annie*

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PrimeTime

film review

Ahead of the rest

INSIDE OUT (U, 102 mins)

DESPITE gargantuan advances in medical science, we still don't fully understand the complexities of the human brain: its ability to process vast quantities of information, solve problems and store memories at speeds that put supercomputers to shame.

Pixar Animation Studios, the wizards who conjured the Toy Story trilogy, contemplate the vagaries of neuropsychology with this visually stunning and emotionally rich comedy, which unfolds predominantly inside the head of a little girl.

This high-brow concept doesn't seem like the most accessible subject matter for a family-oriented computer animation.

But directors Pete Docter and Ronaldo Del Carmen elegantly tilt their film at the windmills of the mind and deliver a hilarious, heartfelt and ultimately life-affirming adventure that celebrates childhood innocence, family unity and the power of the human spirit to overcome adversity.

Laughter and tears abound, as well as cute visual gags, ensuring parents will be repeatedly dabbing their eyes while children whoop and gurgles with glee at the slapstick and rollicking action sequences.



PA Photo/Disney-Pixar

A mother (voiced by Diane Lane) and father (Kyle MacLachlan) welcome a baby girl called Riley (Kaitlyn Dias) into the world.

From the moment she opens her eyes, Riley's mood is shaped by five coloured emotions – golden Joy (Amy Poehler), blue Sadness (Phyllis Smith), purple Fear (Bill Hader), red Anger (Lewis Black) and green Disgust (Mindy Kaling) – which bicker behind a large control desk.

Joy is the dominant emotion in Headquarters and she safeguards Riley's memories, which are stored as glowing orbs, tinged with the colour of the emotion that prevailed at the time.

When Riley turns 11, her parents relocate from Minnesota to San Francisco.

Traumatic events such as a first day at a new school nudge Sadness to the fore.

Following an altercation, sworn rivals Joy and Sadness are expelled from

Headquarters and find themselves stranded in the labyrinth of Riley's long-term memories.

Aided by Riley's imaginary friend Bing Bong (Richard Kind), Joy and Sadness blaze a haphazard trail on the chugging train of thought back to Fear, Anger and Disgust, who have been left in charge of Headquarters, with disastrous consequences.

Inside Out is Pixar's best film since the holy trilogy of WALL-E, Up and Toy Story 3.

The screenplay glitters with imagination, wit and invention, delivering guffaws with detours into the heads of Riley's parents as they attempt to deal with her pre-teenage rebellion.

Vocal performances are note perfect, led by Poehler's exuberant portrayal of Joy and Smith's sincere embodiment of Sadness as the film reaches its exquisite conclusion.

**Released: July 24
RATING: 10/10**

Stage

“I’m used to wearing heels and frocks”

From page 37

Determined to find her real parents, her luck changes when she is chosen to spend Christmas at the residence of famous billionaire, Oliver Warbucks. But spiteful Miss Hannigan has other ideas and hatches a plan to spoil Annie's search.

While this stunning new production includes the unforgettable songs Hard Knock Life, Easy Street, I Don't Need Anything But You and Tomorrow, how true is it to the original?

Craig explains: “It sort of is but the theming is very modern with a different take on it, which leaves a lot of room for actors to act, and the set's fantastic. It's basically a jigsaw of Annie's life being put together. It's going to be a really wonderful set to work in.”

“The show plays really well, we've got a great band and fantastic singers.”

“The show is a great way to introduce children to the theatre.”

Craig believes that the story of Annie has stood the test of time because it is a “classic piece of writing”.

He adds: “It's set in 1933 just out of the depression in New York and prohibition and in these times of austerity it is exactly the same.”

“Kids being fostered and adopted, they are a part of history of that all over the world.”

Craig says he hasn't toured since Cats in 1989 so whether he likes touring nowadays or not he adds: “I'll let you know at the end of it. I'm very excited about Annie and playing Miss Hannigan.”

“I am excited about going around places. We spend a week in each place, sometimes two, so we will be able to settle in a bit.”

One of the places he is looking for to spending some time in is Southend.

“I cannot wait and I'm staying in a beautiful place,” he says. “I really love it there, it's so beautiful. I'm normally there in the winter so it will be different to be coming down in the summer. It's going to be quite a nice thing to have a summer experience there.”

“It's a great theatre and always puts on

great shows. We always have a ball.”

While Craig is probably best known as a judge on BBC One's Strictly Come Dancing, theatregoers will also know him from many West End appearances including Munkustrap in Cats at the New London Theatre, Harry in Crazy for You at the Prince Edward Theatre which took him to the US and Germany before re-creating the show for Susan Stroman in South Africa.

Other theatre credits in his native Australia include West Side Story, The Australian and New Zealand tour of The Danny La Rue Show; La Cage aux Folles, Me and My Girl and Norman in the hit comedy play Ladies Night.

But while Craig is no stranger to the stage, he admits to getting nervous.

“Unfortunately when you first do a role you always feel like that,” he says. “It's live and you never know what's going to happen. It's live and that's what I love.”

So, what with playing Miss Hannigan in Annie, his role as judge on Strictly Come Dancing, appearing in panto later this year and directing a new musical called Pieces of String, and choreographing a new show in Berlin next year, how on earth does the “fab-u-lous” Craig fit it all in?

“You just have to be really focused and enjoy what you do, if you didn't enjoy it, it would be awful,” he says. “It's just a matter of focusing and getting on with it.”

“I've been very lucky in my career. Part of it is luck and being in the right place at the right time and having the talent.”

“I put my money where my mouth is. I don't sit there thinking the rest of my life is fine. I've been directing and choreographing for the past 20 years. I'm used to it, that's what I'm saying. I'm used to wearing heels and frocks.”

■ For tickets to see Annie at the Cliffs Pavilion, Southend, from Monday to Saturday, August 3-8, call the box office on 01702 351135 or visit www.southendtheatres.org.uk.

Liz At Large

YA features reporter Liz Wade goes out and about



Magical day out for the family

If you are looking for a full day out with the whole family then Marsh Farm Animal Adventure Park has something for everyone. From giant inflatables and bouncy pillows, to tractor and trailer rides and plenty of animals, the farm in South Woodham Ferrers is packed with just about everything you could think of.

Set in 30 acres of farmland, Marsh Farm has been given a new lease of life since the Partyman Company took over its management in 2013, so if you haven't been for years then put it in your diary for a return visit – you won't be disappointed.

On arrival visitors are given an itinerary of the day's activities so if you want to spend the whole day out with all the family, there is plenty of scope to do just that.

The Little Magic Book for a Big Day-Out lists all the extra activities taking place at locations across the farm throughout the day such as pet encounters, pony grooming, pig feeding, milking demonstrations in the dairy, and a Magic and Mayhem show with clever tricks and illusions in the barn theatre.

Every day you can also take a tractor and trailer ride through part of the 300-acre country park,

which surrounds Marsh Farm, and keep your eyes peeled for local wildlife including moorhens, geese, pheasants, swans, water voles and rabbits.

On peak days there are added extras including the chance to join Phil the falconer for an educational aerial display, see goats racing in the Marsh Farm Grand National and take part in Championsheeps Live with the family and enjoy everything from space hopper and egg-and-spoon races, to cabbage football keepie-uppies and sack races.

Whatever day or time of year you visit there are plenty of animals to meet including pigs, cows and sheep in the barn, donkeys, ponies and goats in the stables, and llamas, alpacas, goats, Highland cows and reindeer



FAMILY FAVOURITES: Marsh Farm Animal Adventure Park



Indian weaver birds, Java sparrows, diamond doves and a variety

of different finches, to name just a few. Other feathered friends resident at the farm include a variety of birds of prey including Graham the great grey owl, Roxy the hawk and Polly the falcon.

If that wasn't enough then there are plenty of play areas to keep the little ones amused including bouncy pillows, inflatables including a giant rooster, a sand pit play area, complete with climbable tractors and digger slides, a tractor town full of miniature machinery, an



indoor soft play barn with tunnels, slides, nets and a ball pit.

You can also tackle the mini golf course for a refundable deposit of £5, wander around the visitor centre and shop housed in an 18th century barn brought to Marsh Farm from South Ockendon in 1984, and see the farm's original farmhouse, which is thought to be more than 300 years old.

For further information about Marsh Farm visit www.marshfarm.co.uk.

You can read previous days out by visiting www.yellowad.co.uk and clicking on blogs

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PrimeTime
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Saturday, July 25
■ Basildon Saturday Club – for people with special needs, 9am to noon, games, music, arts, crafts. Ages 14 upwards, Frypa Hall, The Fryth, Basildon. 01268 415409.
■ Club 50+ Southend – 9.30am-3.30pm daily, activities, tea bar, non-members welcome, £2 day pass, details 01702 346863.
■ The South East Essex Ramblers – visit <http://sites.google.com/site/southeastessexramblers> to find out when we are walking this week.
■ Counselling service – The Olive Tree Centre, 9am-9pm, call anytime and we will get back to you, 01702 524346, enquiries@olivetreecentre.org.uk.
■ Yugioh Club – play and trade yugioh, 120 Southend Road, St Catherine's Church Hall, Wickford, SS11 8EB, mini tournaments, 1.30-4.20pm. 07985 671289.
■ Dads and Kids Club – The Megacentre, Rayleigh, 10.30am-1.30pm, free entry for ages five to 11 with their fathers and father figures. 01268 779100.
■ Saturday Morning Club – St Michael's Church Hall, Leigh Road, 10am-noon, admission free, Inter-Church Caring for the Elderly and Disabled. 01702 437863.
■ Brush Strokes Art Group – Highlands Methodist Church, Leigh, 9.15am-12.15pm, new members welcome. 01277 627043.
■ Different Strokes Exercise Class – St Peter's Church Hall, Eastbourne Grove, Southend, for those who have had a stroke, 2.30pm. 01702 612509.
■ Jazz workshop – Southend Jazz Co-op, Hadleigh old Fire Station, Hadleigh, 10am-1pm, £5 per session (concessions).

Monday, July 27
■ U3A Riverside (Hullbridge) – 2pm, Pooles Lane Community Centre, Hullbridge SS5 6PA.
■ Ron Spack's Jazzet – Tony Pethen, saxophone, Tony Gooderham, keyboard, Oakwood, Rayleigh Road, Eastwood, 8.30pm, 01702 512819.
■ Coffee Morning – Christ Church, Wickford, 9am to noon, meet friends and chat. All welcome.
■ Club 50+ – 1B Queens Road, Southend, 9.30am-3.30pm daily, non-members welcome, £2 day pass, details 01702 346863.
■ Sunshine Coffee Morning – for parents in Craylands and Felmores area, Briscoe Community Centre, 9-11am, free informative workshop, coffee, cake and creche. Call Dawn 07880 035968, or turn up.
■ Dance class – usually six-week course, ballroom, Latin American, Ashingdon and East Hawkwell Memorial Hall. Info: 01702 546219/542349.
■ Leigh Scrabble Club – 7-10pm. All standards. Wesley Hall, Leigh Broadway, Leigh-on-Sea. Just turn up or call Peter on 01268 727915.
■ George Hurd Centre, Basildon, for the

Sunday, July 26
■ Canvey Miniature Railway Train Rides – by Waterside Sports Centre, Sommes Avenue, Canvey Island, SS8 9PA. 10.30am-4pm, adults and children £1 each a ride, weather

permitting. 07950 659596.
■ Ron Spack's Dinner Jazz – Westcliff Hotel, Westcliff, 1pm. 01702 345247.
■ Hockley & District Horticultural Society trading hut – 10am to noon, for all your gardening sundries, membership £3, behind Hawkwell Village Hall, Main Road, Hawkwell.
■ Sunday School – The Ark, Hadleigh Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, SS7 2PQ, 11am to noon, ages three to 10. Call 07585 601815 or 07967 913344.
■ Quaker Meeting for silent worship and meditation – Quaker Meeting House, Dundonald Drive, Leigh, 10.30-11.30am, followed by conversation over tea and biscuits, all welcome.
■ King's Church Southend – Blenheim School, off Blenheim Chase, Leigh, every Sunday 10.30am-noon, 01702 523639.
■ Greek Community of Southend and District, Church of St Barbara, St Phourouris and St Paul's – Salisbury Avenue, Westcliff, 10am-noon. 01702 466435.
■ Sunday Club – TGH Evangelical Church, Kln Road, Thundersley, children aged three to 12, Bible stories, craft, singing, 10.45-11.45am, no charge, details 01702 554904.
■ Mojo Friendship Club – Travellers' Joy, Downhall Road, Rayleigh, 11.30am, open to all, details Mo 07757 658799.

Tuesday, July 28
■ Rayleigh Horticultural Society Club Night – talk by Mo Perkins: Soft Fruits, St Michael's Church Hall, Sir Walter Raleigh Drive, Rayleigh, 8-10pm. £1.50 members, £2.50 non-members, inc tea or coffee and biscuits.
■ Alzheimer's Society Men's Motivational Group – To book, call 01702 345156 or 343121.
■ Anchor Folk Club – Brooke Williams, 7-9, Northview Drive, Westcliff, 8pm, £8, 01702 715111.
■ Counselling service – The Olive Tree Centre, 9am-9pm, call 01702 524346, enquiries@olivetreecentre.org.uk.
■ Yoga Class – Thorpedene Community Centre, Delaware Road, Shoeburyness, 7-8.30pm, £6, Bring a blanket and your yoga mat, ages 16-plus. 07961 314963.
■ Social Dance Class – with instruction, in ballroom, Latin American and sequence, 8.30-10.30pm, Ashingdon & East Hawkwell Memorial Hall. 01702 546219/542349.
■ Table Tennis – 7.30-10.30pm, The Megacentre, 7 Brook Road, Rayleigh, £3.60 per session.
■ Weekly Craft Group – Oasis Coffee House, 189 Leigh Road, Leigh, 2.30-4pm. No charge. Emma 01702 471873.
■ Willows Park Short Mat Bowls Club requires new or experienced players – James Hornsby School, Laindon weaver. First session free call or text Alan 07952 043456.

over-50s. Craft: 10am to noon, tai chi: whilst 9.45am-12.30pm, 10am to noon, art: 12.30-2.30pm, choir: 2.30-4pm, indoor bowls: 2-4pm. £2, 01268 465854.
■ Senior Citizens Club – Richmond Hall, Benfleet, 1.30-3.30pm.
■ Counselling Service – The Olive Tree Centre, 9am-9pm, call anytime and we will get back to you, 01702 524346, enquiries@olivetreecentre.org.uk.
■ Over-50s Keep-fit Classes – Fryerns Community Centre, details Pat 01268 770294.
■ Over-50s session – Megacentre Rayleigh, 7 Brook Road, Badminton and table tennis 2-4pm. £3.50 inc refreshments and equipment. 01268 773100.
■ Activity Session for adults with special needs – 10am to noon. The Megacentre, Rayleigh, 7 Brook Road, Rayleigh, £1 per session, no charge for carers.
■ Duplicate Bridge – Balmoral Bridge Club, Highlands Methodist Church, Olive Avenue, Leigh (opp Thames Drive), 1.15pm-4.30pm, call Vernon 01702 343611 or Tony 01702 520993.
■ Duplicate Bridge – Thorpe Bay Bridge Club, 62 Southchurch Boulevard, Southend, non-members of all standards welcome, 2-4.45pm (no partner needed), 7.30-10.30pm, call Danny 07843 771774.
■ Weekly Craft Workshop – St Peter's Church Hall, Thundersley, Benfleet, 6-8pm, details Michelle 07730 582784.
■ Basildon Players Amateur Dramatic Group – 8-10pm, James Hornsby High School, Leinster Road, Laindon, details Jeff Levy 07913 426371 or email join@basildonplayers.co.uk.
■ Zumba – Pitsea Day Centre Over-50s Northlands Pavement, Pitsea, 9.15-10am. 01268 465432.
■ Beginners Computer Course – Pitsea Day Centre Over-50s, Northlands Pavement, Pitsea, 11am-1pm. 01268 465432.
■ Short Mat Bowls Club in Hadleigh – welcomes new members, Canvey Short Mat Bowls Club, call Kevin 01268 792433.
■ Short Mat Bowls – in Thundersley, beginners welcome, details 01268 779174.
■ Indoor Short Mat Bowls – Prittlewell Bowls Club, Priory Park, Southend, details Ray 01268 777666.
■ Indoor Bowls – George Hurd Centre, Audley Way, Basildon, for over-50s, Mon 2-4pm, Tues 2.15-4.45pm, Wed 1.30-3.30pm. 01268 465854.
■ Whist – George Hurd Centre, Audley Way, Basildon, for over-50s, 10am to noon, details 01268 465854.
■ Senior Citizens Club – Ghyllgrove Centre, Butneys, 1.30-3.30pm, 01268 293995.

what's on
■ Pensioners stall – York Road Outdoor Market, Southend, 8am-2pm.
■ Evening of clairvoyance – Room 2, Paddocks, Long Road, Canvey, doors 7.30pm, £3, all profits donated to local charities, healing available after service 9pm, enquiries 01268 691922.
■ Healing – in Basildon from 10.30am-7.30pm, £3, all qualified NFSS healers, no charge, all donations to local hospice, call 07956 353564 for an appointment.
■ Development Healing Circle – Face Salon, Burdett Avenue, Westcliff, an understanding of spiritual healing and prayer, 8-9.30pm, details 07879 004744.
■ Fitness Walking – from Leigh Tennis Club, Highlands Boulevard, Leigh, 7.15-8.15pm, details 01702 715509.
■ Scrabble Club – Wesley Church Hall, Elm Road, Leigh Broadway, (opp police station), 10pm, £3 inc tea/coffee, call 01268 727915.
■ Parent and Toddler Messy Play Group – Buttercup Club, St Michael's and All Angels Church, Sir Walter Raleigh Drive, Rayleigh, 9.30am and 11am. 01702 712150.

Wednesday, July 29
■ Canvey Miniature Railway Train Rides – by Waterside Sports Centre, Sommes Avenue, Canvey Island, SS8 9PA. 10.30am-4pm, adults and children £1 each a ride, weather

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PrimeTime

■ Social Dance – 1.45pm, St Cedds Church, Bridgewater Drive, Westcliff. Ballroom, sequence, Latin, 01702 618771.

■ Evening of clairvoyance – St Cecilia's Christian Spiritualist Church, 9 Lord Roberts Avenue, Leigh, 7.15pm, £2, enquiries Anne 01702 556470.

■ Folk Music – The Hoy at Anchor Folk Club, Royal British Legion, 7/9 Northview Drive, Westcliff, Steve Tilston, 8pm. 01702 715111.

■ Tea Dance – Ashington Memorial Hall, Ashington Road, Rochford, ballroom, Latin and sequence, 2-4pm. 01702 584575.

■ Scrabble Club – Hockley Social Centre (rear of library) 6.30-10pm, first two visits free, 01702 205910.

■ Ladies Fellowship – Salvation Army in Hadleigh, 7.30pm, 50p per week or annual subscription, just come along or call 01702 551470.

■ The Puffers Club, Exercise Class for people with breathing difficulties run by people with breathing difficulties, Ambleside Sports and Social Club, Ambleside Drive, Southend, 12.45-2.30pm. 01702 610050/466827.

■ Pathfinders Blind and Partially Sighted Group – Fryerns Baptist Church, Whitmore Way, 9.30am-2pm.

■ Evening of clairvoyance – St Cecilia's Church, 9 Lord Roberts Avenue, Leigh, every Tuesday 7.15pm, £2, enquiries Anne 01702 556470.

■ The George Hurd Centre, Audley Way, Basildon, for the over-50s, yoga: 11.10-12.10, keep fit: noon to 1pm, line dancing: 1.20-2.20pm, chess: 1.30-3.30pm, craft: 1.30-3.30. 01268 465854.

■ Singles Social Group – The Mews, Nelson Mews off Clarence Road car park, Southend, age 50-plus, 8pm. 07970 432994.

■ Singles Friendship Club for 50-plus – South Benfleet Social Club, 8.15pm, details Maureen 01268 692998.

■ New and nearly new stall – outside St Martin's Church, Town Centre, Basildon, (if wet in church foyer), 10am-noon.

■ Table Top Sale – Outpatients Foyer, Southend Hospital, 9.30am-3pm, Breathe Easy Southend, helping support people with lung problems. 01702 258661.

■ Carpet Bowls – Eastwood Community Centre, top of Morrisons car park, 1.45-3.45pm, no experience necessary, £2 per session, joining fee £5, first session free.

■ Bingo and Hoi – Wick Community Centre, Wickford, 1.30-4pm, details John Clarke 01268 570575.

■ Top Cats Social Club, (Southend

Mencap) – Castle View School, Meppel Avenue, Canvey, 7-9.45pm, for adults with learning disabilities age 25-plus, £2 per session, details 01702 341250.

■ Tuesday Luncheon Club – Inter-Church Caring for the Elderly and Disabled, Avenue Baptist Church Hall, Milton Road, Westcliff, for people living alone or with their carers, details 01702 478691/525141/340617.

■ Little Lunchers Activity Club – St Michael's Church, Rayleigh, 11.45am-1.15pm.

■ Vange Tots – Vange Community Centre, Vange Hill Drive, Vange, 9.30-11.30am, admission £1, snack and drinks provided for all. 01268 498642.

■ Shoebury Flagship – Rainbow Children's Centre, Friars School, Constable Way, Shoebury, 1.30-3.30pm, health visiting team with advice and support for parents with babies and children up to five years. 01702 577656.

Wednesday, July 29

■ Belvedere Jazz & Music Club – Alan Barnes All Stars Quintet. 8pm. The Chichester, Rawthorpe SS11 8UE. Tel: 07850 607075

■ Pregnancy Yoga Class – Westwood Primary School, Hadleigh, 8-9pm. £6 per session. Details Linda 01702 552260.

■ Line dancing lessons – 12.30-2.30pm, St Margaret's Church Hall, Lime Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 3PA. 07948 108195.

■ Counselling Service – The Olive Tree Centre, 9am-9pm, call anytime and we will get back to you. 01702 524346, enquiries@olivecentre.org.uk

■ The Concord Ladies Club of Rayleigh – 1.30-3pm. Caley Hall, Crown Hill, Rayleigh, 01268 743240.

■ Leigh Singles Social Club – 45-65s, Bellini's, London Road, Leigh. www.leighsingles.co.uk for details.

■ Activity Session for children with special needs, aged five to 18, The Megacentre, 7 Brook Road, Rayleigh. Donation of £1 per session, siblings welcome.

■ Graham's Social Tea Dance – Richmond Hall, Richmond Avenue, Benfleet. Ballroom, Latin and sequence dances for all abilities. 2-4.25pm, free car park, strictly over-18s, £4 per person. 01268 752473.

■ George Hurd Centre, Audley Way, Basildon, for the over-50s. Keep fit: 10-11am, sit down keep fit: 10-11am, salsa/ballroom: 11.30am-12.30pm, sequence dance: 12.30-1.15pm, art: 1.30-3.30pm, indoor bowls: 1.30-3.30pm, £2. 01268 465854.

■ Barn Dance – Grand Ceilidh Club, Royal Naval Association, East Street, Southend, live music, 8.30pm. 01702 553622.

■ Indoor Carpet Bowls, St Edmunds Hall, Pantile Avenue, Southend, 2-4pm, details Olive 01702 625069.

■ Played Bowls Before? Come and try it at FS&S Club, Gardiners Close, Basildon, all-weather green, free coaching given, call Chris 01268 419831.

■ Breathing Exercise Group – run by Breathe Easy Basildon, Steeple View Memorial Hall, 1-2.30pm, if you have COPD or recently finished pulmonary rehabilitation call Honore 01268 574390.

■ Social ballroom and Latin dancing – Mill Hall, Rayleigh, 1.45-4.15pm, with Pat and Bob. 01702 544112.

■ Health Walk – Canvey Sea Wall, 10.30am, meet Labworth car park, Canvey Island, details 01702 318121.

■ Alonan, International/Worldwide Support Group – for families/friends of alcoholics and other addicts, 1 Sutton Road, All Saints Church, Southchurch, Southend, 7.30pm, (non-denominational).

■ Pulse Drum Club – St David's Church Hall, Rayleigh Road, Eastwood, 3.45pm-4.45pm, £3 per session. 01702 540111.

■ Over-50s session – Megacentre Rayleigh, 7 Brook Road, Rayleigh. Badminton and short mat bowls 2-4pm, £3.50 inc use of equipment. 01268 773100.

■ Activity sessions – The Megacentre, 7 Brook Road, Rayleigh, for children with special needs, aged five to 18, free entry, siblings welcome, details 01268 779100.

■ Palace Writers Group – 7.30pm, alternating venues with the Palace and Cliffs Pavilion, open mic events and public readings, details Emily 01702 390472.

■ Roche Art Group – St Teresa's Church Hall, 109 Ashington Road, Rochford, 7.30-9.30pm, details Gill 01702 421737.

■ Advanced Computer Course – Pitsea Day Centre over-50s, Northlands Pavement, Pitsea, 9.30-11.30am. 01268 465432.

■ Duplicate Bridge – Highlands Methodist Church, Olive Avenue, Leigh, 7.30pm, details Hilary 01702 712501.

■ Parent and Toddler Messy Play Group – Buttercup Club, Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road, Leigh, 9.30am and 11am, 01702 712150.

■ Brentwood Buddies – new social club for ages 40-60, The Essex Arms, Warley Hill, Brentwood, 8pm. Contact Julie on 07969 071392 by text or phone before turning up.

Thursday, July 30

■ Alzheimer's Society activity group – To book, call 01702 345156 or 343121.

■ Counselling service – The Olive Tree Centre, 9am-9pm, call anytime and we

what's on

will get back to you, 01702 524346, enquiries@olivecentre.org.uk.

■ Thundersley Gardening Association – 7.45pm, Swans Green Hall, Hart Road, Thundersley, please bring exhibits, £3.

■ George Hurd Centre, Audley Way, Basildon, for the over-50s. Line Dancing: 1-2pm, computer £3: 1-3.30pm, indoor bowls: 2.15-4.15pm, bridge 9.30am-12.30pm, ceramics, 1.30-3pm. £2. 01268 465854.

■ Health Walk – Hockley Woods, 10.45am, car parking in Hockley Woods car park, details 01702 318121.

■ Jive classes – Ambleside Social Club, Ambleside Drive, Southend, 8pm, £5 (first night free), all ages welcome, no need to bring a partner. 07771 831507.

■ Buddies Over 50 Singles Club – Anchor Pub, Benfleet, 8.30pm, details Dee, 01268 565045.

■ Westcliff National Spiritualist Church – Hildaville Drive, Westcliff, mediums demonstrate clairvoyance, 7.30pm.

■ Pottery – George Hurd Centre, Audley Way, Basildon, for the over-50s, 1.30-3.30pm. 01268 465854.

■ Coffee, cake and chat – WI Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, 2pm, details Di 07952 148636 or Linda 07504 114762.

■ Stalls in outpatients dept – next to postbox, Southend Hospital, books, bric-a-brac, handknits etc, 8.30am-3.30pm, all proceeds to Key Hole Cancer Appeal.

■ Tea Dance – St James' Church Hall, Elmsleigh Drive, Leigh, ballroom, Latin and sequence, 2-4.15pm. 01268 770112.

■ Ceramics – The George Hurd Centre, Audley Way, Basildon, for the over-50s, 2-4pm, details 01268 465854.

■ Short Mat Bowls – Willows Park, James Hornsby School, Leinster Road, Laindon, 7.30pm, details 01277 625027.

■ Clairvoyance – The Sandpiper Community Centre, Sandpiper Close, Shoeburyness, 8-10pm, 01702 476087.

■ Healing – The Cedars, Castle Road, Rayleigh, fully trained healers by Essex Healers Association, 10-11.30am.

■ Billericay Baby Cafe – Community Church, Queens Park, Billericay, for breastfeeding mums, 12.30pm.

■ Learn to paint in watercolours in Hadleigh with tutor Trevor Shaw. For more information call 01702 558282.

Friday, July 31

■ Overeaters Anonymous Basildon Group, 8pm, Nevenden Community Hall, St Peter's Church, Church Lane, Basildon, SS13 1BZ. Colin, 07446 080054.

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Advertisement Feature

LEIGH-ON-SPICE

IF YOU are looking for somewhere to delight the senses then take a seat in Leigh-On Spice, an establishment that doesn't just tantalise the taste buds.

As soon as you walk into the restaurant, in the heart of Leigh-on-Sea, you are treated to wonderful aromas of the finest Bangladeshi and Indian cuisine.

Leigh-On Spice replaces the former, long established Pipasha restaurant in a bold move by its new owners, who have not only transformed the establishment with a new name, but have also given it a complete refurbishment, both inside and out.

The result is a restaurant that is easy on the eye and packed with traditional Indian design, that in turn makes it a welcoming and comfortable environment in which to enjoy a delicious meal with friends and family.

Taking a seat with my wife, as well as two friends, we lingered over the menu which was packed with a wide range of classic favourites, such as Madras, Dupiaza, Korma and Bhuna dishes, as well as a wide selection of House Specials and Chef's Recommendations.

After much contemplation we feasted on a Mixed Platter, Sheek Kebab, Onion Bhaji and King Prawn Puree, served on a crispy bread, for starters. Each were cooked to perfection and infused with their own unique blend of spices.

It was then on to a range of main dishes that each offered something different including a Garlic Chilli Chicken Tikka Masala – a House Special cooked with fresh garlic and chilli in a masala sauce – King Prawn Butterfly with fried rice, Chicken Biryani, and Spice Special Chicken Balti cooked in a unique method using the chef's special spices and green peppers and onions, all of which we enjoyed with plain nan bread.

The restaurant prides itself on using only the best local British produce wherever possible and the freshest seasonal ingredients in its dishes, which is reflected in the taste of each course. Alongside this they do not use any artificial colours in their food, instead using authentic recipes and their chef's very one secret recipe sauce. All of this allows them to provide diners with a menu that offers a contemporary, if not extraordinary twist on traditional dishes from Bangladesh and India.

Its friendly staff were welcoming from the moment we arrived and were happy to cater to our every whim, so don't be afraid to ask for something different. If you would like any curry which is not on the menu then just

put in a request, as long as he has all the ingredients the chef is happy to create a dish just for you.

Dining on a Wednesday evening the restaurant was bubbly but not too packed, with half of its 82 seats taken. While there were a number of other people dining in the restaurant at the same time service wasn't hindered in the slightest with each course arriving within 15 minutes of it being ordered. This included our sweets - Fantastica Vanilla Ice Cream from their dessert menu – which also arrived without any fuss, along with three Irish coffees.

While we chose at will from the restaurant's a la carte menu, Wednesday night is also Banquet Night at Leigh-On Spice, when you can enjoy a four-course meal including any starter, main dish, side dish, rice or nan, for just £10.95 per person, (seafood and mix grill an extra £2.95).

Other offers for diners at the restaurant include a Monday Summer Special, which includes a starter or side dish, a main dish from the menu's Classic Favourites section, as well as rice or nan, for just £9.95 per person (seafood and mix grill an extra £2.95).

A delicious buffet is also available from Monday to Saturday evening and all day on Sunday, for those dining in. From just £6.95 to £10.95 for adults and either £4.95 or £5.95 for children under 12, depending on when you visit, it is outstanding value-for-money.

The restaurant also has a Membership Gold Card scheme for diners, offering a 10 per cent discount, and a variety of deals for takeaway customers. These include a free bottle of coke on orders over £25 and a free bottle of wine, red or white, on orders over £35 (both delivery only) and a 10 per cent discount on collections on orders over £10.

Leigh-On Spice, at 285-291 Eastwood Road North, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 4LT, is also fully licensed and air conditioned, and offers wheelchair access and free Wi-Fi.


For further information about the restaurant, which is open from noon to 2pm, and 5.30pm to 11.30pm from Monday to Saturday, and from noon to 10.30pm on Sunday, call Leigh-On Spice on 01702 521111.

CLIFFS PAVILION
www.thecliffspavilion.co.uk
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PrimeTime

eating out

A taste of Italy at Il Palazzo

Advertisement feature

VISIT Il Palazzo and enjoy the genuine taste of Italy in Southend. With restaurants in Westcliff and Southchurch, diners can now enjoy all their favourite Italian dishes, including a wide range of pizzas, pastas, risottos, as well as meat and fish dishes.

Tradition meets modernity as chefs at this popular restaurant offer sensational twists on Italian classics.

This combination of simplicity, freshness and exquisite flavour has wowed guests since its grand opening earlier this year.

"We wanted to give our diners the chance to try something new," says Il Palazzo's owner.

"That may mean enjoying the Il Palazzo version of a dish they know or something a bit special that they wouldn't find anywhere else.

"We want our guests to be as excited about the menu as we are."

Il Palazzo's all-day opening hours make it the perfect choice for those seeking a bite in the day, as well as those wishing to wine and dine in the evening.

Both the Westcliff and Southchurch venues offer diners of all ages a relaxed, family-friendly atmosphere in which to enjoy their meal.

The vast menu has a wide range of dishes, taking inspiration from almost every part of Italy.

Diners can choose from a wide selection of pasta, pizza, meat and fish dishes, as well as starters, desserts and chef specials, all served at reasonable prices.

For the younger diners there is the Il Palazzo children's menu, which provides bambinos with a choice of pasta dishes or pizza for just £3.95

Daytime diners can order from the lunch menu, which includes Italian paninis with chips for £4.95, any pizza or pasta dish for £5.95 or two courses for £9.95 – and now offering customers free parking – you get a money refund when you



park in the nearby public car park. Evening diners can enjoy a two-course meal with a choice of starter and main course for just £12.95, between Sunday and Thursday.

At the weekend, diners can enjoy the Il Palazzo Sunday roast, served with all the trimmings for just £6.95. Both restaurants have an extensive wine list and serve coffee and cake from 10.30am to 4pm from Monday to Saturday.

Italian hospitality is second to none and Il Palazzo has proven to be a popular location for celebrations of every kind.

With a capacity of up to 90 people Il Palazzo is the perfect venue for everything from birthday and anniversaries, to staff parties and awards ceremonies.

Il Palazzo Westcliff has proved popular with

theatre enthusiasts as its location opposite the Palace Theatre makes it the perfect place to enjoy a pre-show meal.

If you would like to know more, visit www.ilpalazzo.co.uk.

Il Palazzo Southchurch is at 513 Southchurch Road, Southend. Call 01702 467 793 for reservations.

Il Palazzo Westcliff is at 1 West Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, opposite Palace Theatre. Call 01702 341 888 for reservations.

Please be aware when booking that you are choosing the correct location.

Pre-Christmas party bookings are now being taken for a special three-course menu for £19.95.

Both locations are also open on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Eve.

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Advertisement feature

A TRADITIONAL pub and restaurant has it all, from the very best in English cuisine with a hint of Mediterranean and Asian influences to an excellent selection of ales, lagers and wine.

The Bell & Chimes Restaurant, on Rettendon Common, has a warm, relaxed atmosphere making it the ideal venue for everyone from those looking for fine dining to others searching for a quality pub meal.

Throughout the year you can enjoy a drink and a bite to eat in The Bell's comfortable bar – open all day, every day – or a delicious meal in its 50-seater Chimes Restaurant, which is open every evening and for Sunday lunch.

Its mid-week Menu, offering a choice of two courses for £10.95 or three courses for just £11.95, is packed with a wide range of choices, from whitebait and Italian pasta to smoked mackerel and soup of the day to start, followed by a fantastic range of main dishes, such as homemade pie of the day, homecooked ham with eggs, pan-fried liver and bacon, baked seafood and homemade lasagne.

If you have room for more, then there is a range of delicious sweets to enjoy from the trolley.

An a la carte menu is served in the restaurant on Saturday evenings which also has extensive choice including venison pate, Scottish smoked salmon, garlic mushrooms, and rosemary and garlic brie for starters, and succulent roast, pork tenderloin, lamb shank, chicken Portobello – succulent chicken breast smothered with Madeira and mushroom sauce – as well as grill and fish dishes for mains.

All of this is complimented by a wide range of side orders and desserts including sweets from the trolley.

More choice is available on Sunday as staff serve a snack menu in the bar area and a comprehensive blackboard which always includes a choice of four roasts, the famous homemade pie



of the day and fresh fish, and other dishes.

Its Sunday lunch menu costs £8.95 for a main meal, £10.75 for two courses and £12.25 for three courses.

There is also a comprehensive bar menu offering a range of favourites from prawn cocktail, potato wedges and rack of ribs, to burger meals, scampi and ploughman's.

The Chimes Restaurant itself can also be hired for private functions, whether you want to enjoy a sit-down meal for up to 50 people, or a buffet style celebration for up to 100.

During the summer you can enjoy alfresco din-

ing at the front of the premises, and every Thursday evening from 9pm there is a quiz night in the bar area.

With so much to offer, including free wi-fi, it is clear why so many people make The Bell & Chimes their first choice, whether they are looking for a quick lunch, a bite to eat after work, the perfect location for a social gathering or celebration, or the venue for a business lunch.

For further information, or to make a reservation, call The Bell & Chimes Restaurant on 01245 400616 or visit www.bellandchimesrettendon.co.uk.

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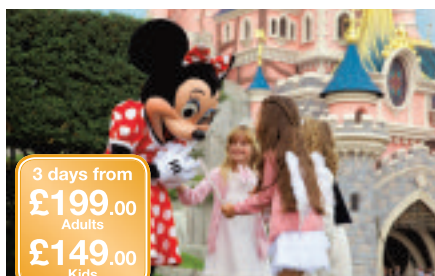
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Motoring

Verso is bright star in family market

By Ian Johnson

TOYOTA rarely puts a foot wrong in the evolution of its products, a case proven with its Verso model.

This compact MPV is designed and engineered in Europe and joins the Auris in Toyota's renewed drive forwards in the highly competitive compact/family car market.

It is in this area that customer demands are at their most intense. Rest on your laurels here and things get very gloomy indeed.

But the latest Verso is one of the bright stars.

As with each previous generation of the model, it has been tailored to meet the increasingly varied requirements of customers.

Since the original Verso was launched in 2002, more than 700,000 have been sold in Europe, and in the UK the total is in excess of 52,000.

This model majors on fundamental quality, durability, reliability and value for money.

A spacious interior within compact exterior dimensions is the order of the day with Toyota's Easy Flat folding rear seat system to provide the versatility demanded of a vehicle in this category. There are three engine options, 1.6 and 1.8 petrol and a 1.6 diesel.

This car, a 1.6 ValveMatic petrol weighed in at £20,300 and was a very smooth per-

GOOD SELLER: The Toyota Verso Icon 1.6 ValveMatic



former for what is the entry power option.

With 115mph on tap and a 0-62mph sprint of 11.7 seconds it is no slouch as a family car but top marks have to go to the engine and six-speed manual gearbox combination which delivers a silky driving experience.

For a 1.6 petrol economy is not too bad with 42.8mpg on the combined cycle with a CO2 emissions readout of 154g/km.

The Verso's multimedia package is the latest-generation Toyota Touch 2 system.

Providing easy touchscreen operation it features Bluetooth, rear-view camera and

USB connectivity and benefits from a sharper, brighter display. The more sophisticated Toyota Touch 2 with Go system which was fitted as an option ramps up the feature content with a new navigation screen design, use of TomTom HD real-time traffic information to deliver detour prompts to avoid hold-ups, and new connected services to gain better journey information.

These include access to Google Street View and Panoramio, a first from a high-volume manufacturer.

The Verso features what is known as a

Smart Wave Dynamism dashboard design, which raises the cabin styling above the conventional forms of a traditional MPV.

The ergonomic approach includes placing the gear lever as close as possible to the steering wheel, while the strong, vertical definition of the centre console marks a clear division between the functionality of the driver's zone and the relaxed, comfortable environment around the front passenger area.

On the road, improvements in steering feel and response are very noticeable, giving the Verso almost sports saloon handling.

The UK Verso range has a five-grade structure: Active, Icon, Trend, Trend Plus and Excel. Entry point is the five-seat Active with the 1.6 ValveMatic engine.

FAST FACTS

Price: £20,300

Mechanical: 132ps, 1,598cc, four-cylinder petrol engine driving front wheels via six-speed manual gearbox

Max speed: 115mph

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MARIE voluptuous female looking for discreet naughty guy to help me get back into shape and enjoy adult fun along the way. What are you waiting for call me. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405285
JENNI, 52 bored housewife wants no strings fun with younger chap. Text Only 4550197

ELAINE very attractive lady with great personality and very interests looking to live life to the full with similar mature flexible friend. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405289
HONEST sincere caring lady, 40's, looking for over 40yrs N/S romantic honest sincere gentleman with GOSH for friendship, possible LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 371809

BEV very attractive female who loves cosy night in, travel, cooking seeks caring warm hearted man who can put the spark back into my life. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406093
LUCY, 32yrs, blonde lady seeks naughty boys of any age for no strings fun. Tel No: 0905 002 1887 Box No: 413443

PROFESSIONAL black woman, seeks educated, professional, white male, 45-60, 6ft plus for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406069
ADVENTUROUS sexy lady, 38yrs, married but seeks no strings fun with discreet man, any age. I'm tall, slim and dominant. Aca. Tel No: 0905 002 1937 Box No: 415301

ATTRACTIVE young looking widow, 65, likes most things seeks nice gent 60-70 for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406133
LUCY, broadminded 18yrs seeks discreet fun with men any age. Aca. Tel No: 0905 002 1941 Box No: 365051

DIVORCED female, 66, blue eyes, 5ft 4ins, medium build, blonde hair, seeks male, 66-75 for friendship/companionship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406059
SEXY brunette, mid 20's busty, adventurous broad minded seeks no strings fun. Tel No: 0905 002 1949 Box No: 361739

JULIE blonde petite nurse loves holidaying, socialising, horses, WLTW happy man who fancies taking a chance on me, I promise you'll be glad you did. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405819
TRACY, 36yrs, hubble away on the rips dec/jan, seeks discreet fun with clean chap any age? Text Only 4590837

WIDOWED lady 68, 5ft 4ins, average build, fair hair, WLTW man, 60-70 for friendship. Southend on Sea. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 369289
SALLY, 38yrs large cuddly lady seeks slim men for discreet meetings. Text Only 4550193
CLAUDIA affectionate loving 29yr old sensual female who enjoys keeping active seeking professional male up to 50yrs for discreet adult 1-2-1. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405807

TRUDY 36yrs, wlm broadminded men of any age/area for daytime meetings. Text Only 4550194
WIDOW 70, honest, sincere, caring, likes music, caravans, gardening, walks, days out, seeks male. Southend. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405999

CAROLE fair hair, blue eyes, 5ft 7ins, likes countryside, beach, walks, cooking, pubs, socialising, seeks sincere, kind male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 369949
YOUNG looking Essex lady, 60's, N/S, GSOH, likes music, walks, cinema, looking to meet nice gent for LTR and friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 404193

ROSHAN 56yrs female seeking someone similar, sincere, honest, 56-60 for LTR. No married men or timeasters. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 404391
ATTRACTIVE slim lady early 60's, N/S, GSOH, likes music, walks, cinema, looking to meet nice gent for LTR and friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 404193

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WHITE male, 46, 5ft 6ins, medium build, brown hair, green eyes, honest, loyal, friendly, seeks female, 45-60. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406277
JOHN, 42yrs professional genuine gent seeks caring lady to treat as a princess. Text Only 4550195

MALE 66, looking for soul mate, seeking lady, 55-70, meals in/out, romantic drives, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406253
DAVE 41, white, tall, dark hair, slim, seeks female, 40-50 for pubs, nights out, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406243

SINGLE professional, good looking Indian male, 5ft 7ins, medium build, 53, quiet, seeks lady, any nationality for relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406241
TED 61, 5ft 7ins, stocky, divorced, smoker, likes walks, dancing, meals out, seeks slim female of any age for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406233

DEREK self employed, likes meals out, boot fairs, seeking female for 1-2-1 relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406225
LANDSCAPE builder, fit, funny, down to earth, seeks fit female, black/white or Asian. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406267

WHITE guy 25, seeking lady, 19-30 for dating and friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406197
ATTRACTIVE white male 39, good build, seeks black slim female 25-40 of LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405133
GENUINE male, seeks genuine lady, 40-50 to enjoy life with. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 392034

CHRIS 50, medium build, brown hair/eyes, glasses, many interests, seeks petite-medium build, N/S lady, 50 plus. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 390718
SMART Essex male, 64, 5ft 9ins, N/S, likes animals, travel, seeks slim, loving female for sharing life. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405619

32YR old male, 6ft 2ins, baby blue eyes, slim, smoker, seeks mature female, 40-50. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405977
BRIAN 50, 5ft 9ins, medium build, attractive, seeks attractive white female, 40-50 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405959

MATURE cougar 65 plus sought by younger male, late 30's for good fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405787
TOYBOY attractive 39, slim, intelligent, patient, caring, seeks lady, any age/looks for rewarding times. Essex/Brentwood. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 399131

SHORT fat ugly bloke, SE London, 43, looking for love. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 393516
IS anybody out there? Open minded Mulder type male, N/S, 51, seeks close encounters with N/S female Mulder, 50 plus for watch the skies, meals in out etc. Truth is out there and I want to believe. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405589

JAMES, hard working single dad, late 30's seeks single mum for family days out. Text Only 4550196

FIT fellow, full of fun, 58, seeks to find fanciable lady for free and fascinating future for LTR. Find your jar half full. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 405857
RICHARD, 36yrs, recently widowed with young daughter, seeks motherly lady for committed relationship. Text Only 4590838

SHY quiet 49yr old African/English male, seeking companion, black British, 40-52 for good times and romance. Tel No: 0906 500 3766 Box No: 406297

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Men seeking women

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Boxes are open for the receipt of bona fide answers and are not available for distribution of trade canvassing matter. Original testimonials, goods, cash, cash stamps or payments of any kind must not be enclosed. A box Number and postal address are charged as part of the advertisement, i.e. Box No., centre address. There is no charge for forwarding replies.

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DIANE voluptuous curvy and all woman, loves dancing, walking, cosy nights in, WLTM nice man for friendship, hopefully leading to something more. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412321**

SIMONE bossy dominant female seeking submissive male to show me good times, treat me the way I deserve and spoil me. If you can handle me get in touch. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412179**

HELEN petite auburn haired attractive single female, OHAC, likes quiet nights in, cinema, WLTM tactile male with GSOH for dates/chats. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412171**

MICHELLE very lonely single mum, 25yrs, looking for male friend to enjoy nights in, good conversations and hopefully leading to more. Looks/age not important. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412175**

PETITE slim blonde 39yrs, pretty big blue eyes, looking for similar easygoing older male to put a spark back into my life, enjoy nights in/out and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412327**

JULIE attractive 35yr old female with a great body, looking for no strings attached evening meetings. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412309**

SAM young slim brunette, pretty, sporty, loves dancing, walking, music, eating out, travel, looking for N/S male for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412309**

KAREN an attractive blue eyed redhead, curvy size 16, likes films, football, pubs, reading, seeking likeminded male for nights in/out, hopefully more. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412057**

JANE 29yr old horsey female, loves the outdoors, cycling, as well as duvet days, WLTM not too serious male for a hopefully normal relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412315**

SHARON 32yrs and still soul searching for Mr Right, I enjoy keeping in shape, caring for people, seeking loving respectful guy who also knows a good time. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412049**

MARY 5ft 6in size 12 blonde, nice personality, good conversationalist, interesting, lots of interests WLTM likeminded caring, happy male. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412169**

KATIE 26yr old pretty slim blue eyed blonde looking for evening entertainment with open-minded discreet guy, any age. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412319**

CLARE 36yrs successful single mum, independent, employed with OHAC, size 10, green eyes, pretty, likes swimming, family life, seeking male with similar values and interests. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412053**

JESS 24yr old bubbly single mum looking for caring genuine male to spend quality times in or out, looks unimportant but kind heart essential. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412317**

KATHY easy going curvy tanned nurse looking for relaxation and fun times with appreciative uncomplicated male, any age/looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 411893**

SARA bored blonde looking for single gents for fun, chats and meets, looking forward to hearing from you, don't be shy. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412055**

PASSIONATE honest slim blue eyed blonde, 39yrs, likes nights in/out, looking for affectionate male, any age to spend adult fun times. Interested? Call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412173**

MARILYN really nice curvy tactile female, loves romantic walks, cosy nights in, quality times, looking for nice male to spend time and fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 411871**

IRENE 33, dark hair, green eyes, attractive, cuddly build, loves music, walking, romantic nights in, looking for genuine male with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412043**

JULIE attractive outgoing female with a very young attitude, loves running, living life, travel, WLTM someone special to make my life complete, hope you're out there. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 411513**

LINDA 37, green eyes, attractive, bubbly size 12, enjoys cosy nights in, text chats, seeking tallish fun guy for meals out, pubs, clubs and spending quality times. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 411033**

CAROL pretty, dark highlighted hair, loves horses, dogs, travel, easy-going, GSOH, looking for similar kind sensitive, caring man to spend time with. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412039**

FREYA 33 6ft blonde, loves dancing and have a good time, employed, own home, one son, seeking similar laid-back guy/dad for dates, chats and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 412045**

JAN 5ft 6ins, dark hair/eyes, nice smile, likes music, travel, countryside, animals, employed, OHAC, looking for companionship with similar lonely heart. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 411865**

SARAH 25 petite slim attractive blonde student, enjoys keeping fit, looking good, socialising, going out, being a mum WLTM similar fun genuine guy. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 411537**

KIRSTY blonde blue eyed size 12 nurse, enjoys cosy nights, driving, holidays, socialising, WLTM broad-minded male for adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 409259**

MID naughty forthright female looking fun, thrills and discreet meets, give me a call, you won't be disappointed. Any age with own accommodation. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 409109**

KATH blonde independent female, employed with OHAC looking for fun and laughter with likeminded nice easy going male, any age. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 409755**

DEBBIE 38 blonde attractive size 12, enjoys keeping fit all the fine things in life, seeking intelligent witty male for fun times, only, no commitment. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 411877**

TRACY slim dark haired beauty, petite, hardworking career, enjoys dancing, nights out, WLTM loving male who can make me laugh for an adult relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 409419**

SUE independent confident female who knows exactly what she wants, fit, intelligent, loves the Arts, seeks sensitive, interesting soul mate. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 409415**

SUSAN attractive single female looking for really nice guy for cosy nights in and fun nights out. Go on give me a call and let's go out or have a chat. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 409411**

SHARON very attractive British black lady, sexy size 6 looking for white male to fall in love with. Beautiful people can be lonely too. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 409263**

ANITA very attractive black female, seeking mature white/Asian man to enjoy uncomplicated relationship with no ties. Any age, pls contact me, I'm very lonely. **Tel No: 0906 500 6358 Box No: 408505**

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PAYET BRACE SINKS BLUES

Football

Southend 2 West Ham 3
Brian Jeeves reporting from
Roots Hall Stadium

FRENCH international Dimitri Payet bagged an impressive brace as West Ham United edged out Southend United in what was an entertaining Roots Hall run-out.

With a local feelgood factor surrounding Phil Brown's Shrimpers, there was a bumper crowd at Roots Hall for what is always an eagerly anticipated pre-season fixture.

For many Blues fans, it was a first opportunity to see new signings Anthony Wordsworth and David Mooney, while manager Brown used the game to look at potential new additions Stephane Zubar and Danny Galbraith.

West Ham arrived on the south east Essex coast off the back of a narrow Europa League victory over Maltese cup winners Birkirkara, and with manager Slaven Bilic fairly content with how the Hammers' pre-season preparations are shaping up.

On a glorious afternoon it was the Hammers who were first to threaten.

Blues keeper Daniel Bentley tipping over Djair Parfitt-Williams's angled effort. At the other end David Mooney was unable to direct his header goalwards after a sweeping move down the left.

West Ham went close to opening

the scoring when Stephen Hendrie guided beyond Bentley, but could only look on as his effort drifted the wrong side of an upright. Soon after, the Blues keeper was called upon again, this time expertly fielding Payet's strike from distance.

But in the 20th minute Southend made the breakthrough. Kevan Hurst cut in from the left, and his deflected effort beat Darren Randolph at his near post.

Minutes later Blues almost doubled their advantage. Myles Weston picked the pocket of Hendrie but Randolph did well to turn aside his curling strike.

But West Ham found their feet and after Martin Samuelsen was floored by John White, Payet brilliantly sent his dead-ball effort beyond Bentley to restore parity.

Before Southend could recover Payet spectacularly struck again.

Jack Payne lost possession for Blues, and the Hammers man lashed past Bentley from 25 yards, despite the attentions of Luke Prosser.

Diafra Sakho looked to extend the Hammers lead further, but Bentley was equal to his low drive. But within seconds Blues were level. Anthony Wordsworth seized on hesitant keeping from Randolph and centred for midfielder Payne who stooped to head the Blues level.

After the interval Bentley did well to thwart Sakho, this after the Sene-

galese international had wriggled clear of Prosser. But when man of the match Payet drilled in from the left flank, Blues defender Prosser could only direct the ball into his own net to restore the Hammers lead.

Payne warmed Randolph's palms as the Blues looked for an immediate response, while Payet forced Bentley into a smart save as the end-to-end nature of the contest continued.

Substitutes Modibo Maiga and Josh Cullen were off-target with late opportunities as the Hammers looked to seal the contest, while Will Atkinson fired horribly wide on a Blues foray forward.

Afterwards, Blues boss Phil Brown said: "We gave a good account of ourselves, nobody was embarrassed, we passed the ball well, we kept possession well, I thought we got chances as well and we defended properly."

On Payet's performance, Brown stated: "That first free-kick was top draw, and the second goal was just as good, it was a fabulous finish."

"Will we come up against a striker like that in the First Division? I doubt it very much. But it was a good test of character, it was a warm day and fitness levels were good."

Blues goalscorer Hurst said: "The pitch was looking great, good opposition, I really enjoyed today."

Hammers' Scottish defender Hendrie said: "That was my first start. It's progressing more and more, as the team play more games we are going to get more fit and up to 100 per cent. Obviously, once we get to 100 per cent the Europa League games will help us to start the Premier League."

On opponents Southend, Hendrie said: "You always know when you come to a place like this that it's going to be a hard game. They worked hard as a team. They move the ball well, I always thought they were going to be a good side."

Both teams continue their pre-season preparations on Saturday.

The Shrimpers visit Dagenham & Redbridge, while the Hammers travel to the Valley to face Charlton Athletic. Both kick-off at 3pm.

Southend United: Daniel Bentley (Ted Smith), John White (capt) (Stephane Zubar), Ben Coker (Jack Bridge), Anthony Wordsworth (Will Atkinson), Luke Prosser (Adam Barrett), David Mooney (Danny Galbraith), Jack Payne (Ryan Leonard), Myles Weston (David Worrall), Kevan Hurst (Michael Timlin), Cian Bolger, (Dan Matuszaka) Gary Deegan (Jason Williams).

West Ham United: Darren Randolph, Djair Parfitt-Williams (Nathan Mavilla), Angelo Ogbonna (Reece Oxford), Stephen Hendrie (Lewis Page), Chiekhhou Kouyate (Amos Nasha), Martin Samuelsen (Modibo Maiga), Dimitri Payet (Josh Cullen), Diafra Sakho, Alex Pike, Diego Poyet.

Referee: Ben Toner.

Assistants: Matt Donohue and Garry Maskell

Fourth Official: Sam Barrott

Non-league round-up

Gulls boost their ranks

By Brian Jeeves

RYMAN Premier League outfit Canvey Island have announced that Junior Lewis has joined the club's coaching staff.

Lewis played in the Premier League with Leicester City and enjoyed spells at Gillingham, Hull City and Brentford.

Talking to the Gulls official website, manager Danny Heale said: "Bringing Junior Lewis to the club is a massive coup. Peter Taylor has worked with him at several clubs and spoke very highly about him, and since coming in he has shown exactly why this is."

Heale added: "He was assistant manager at Leeds United last season, and having brought in a lot of experienced players it makes sense to bring in an experienced coach like Junior to work alongside Brad, Wardy, Stacey and myself."

"He's a bit of a disciplinarian, which shows how seriously he is taking his role with the club, and already he has gained the respect of the players and fellow coaches."

This was not the only arrival at Park Lane, with utility man Lawrence Yiga signing for the 2015/16 campaign.

Yiga, 29, formerly played with Billericay Town, Thurrock and Witham Town.

He impressed manager Heale playing as a trialist in the Gulls friendly with Dartford.

Yiga was on target as Canvey took on Aveley in what turned out to be an entertaining pre-season runoff.

Ozzy Adeniji, John Easterford and Dan Gilchrist also found the net for the Gulls, but a brace from Liam Nash plus goals from Marcus Elliot and Petri Elbi ensured the Millers had a share of the spoils from this eight-goal thriller.

A bumper crowd of 1,307 turned out at the Melbourne Stadium to see Chelmsford City's prestigious friendly with a West Ham United XI.

The east Londoners included Reece Oxford in their line-up. The young defender recently made his first team debut for the Hammers in the Europa League tie with FC Lusitans.

West Ham's class told in the end as goals from Jordan Brown (2), Nathan Mavilla and Jaanai Gordon sent City tumbling to a 4-0 defeat.

Meanwhile, City have moved to sign Charlie Henry and Michael Toner.

Henry previously left the Claret's two seasons ago to play for Team Wellington in New Zealand, and has re-joined after a successful trial. While Toner signed terms for the upcoming season after impressing last term following his arrival from Harlow Town.

Concord Rangers produced a five-star performance as Adan Flanagan's men warmed up for the National League South campaign.

Ben Greenhalgh, Tony Stokes (2), Lewis Taaffe and Bertie Brayley were all on target as the Beach Boys saw off Harlow Town 5-0.

National League Premier side Braintree Town edged out Sky Bet League One Southend United at Cressing Road.

A first half brace from Simeon Akinola put the hosts in the driving seat. Blues new signing David Mooney halved the deficit after the break from the penalty spot but the Iron held out for victory.

Cricket

Essex sign Patel on short term loan

ESSEX County Cricket Club have signed Ravi Patel from Middlesex on a short term loan.

The 23-year-old will join Essex for the next two LV= County Championship matches after another loan signing, Liam Dawson, was recalled by his parent club Hampshire.

Essex head coach Paul Grayson said: "Ravi is one of the best young spinners in the country. Obviously he's not playing much cricket at the moment, and we welcome him to the squad for the game at Tunbridge Wells on Sunday."

The left-arm bowler joins Essex with 50 first-class wickets to his name in 18 matches.

Patel will also be available for selection to face Surrey at the Colchester Cricket Festival in August.

Scott on the spot for young Shrimpers

Great Wakering Rovers 0
Southend United U21s 1
Brian Jeeves reporting from
Burroughs Park

SOUTHEND United manager Phil Brown was fairly content after the newly formed Shrimpers under-21 team edged past Ryman League One North outfit Great Wakering Rovers at Burroughs Park.

"It's a man's game for the young boys," Brown stated.

"To get 1-0 up and then hang on the way they did, I thought was a very professional performance. There were one or two good signs."

In what was a fairly low-key first half, chances came at a premium with very little to excite the bumper crowd of 821.

Nonetheless there was far more to excite the fans after the break.

Blues keeper Josh Bexon made a trio of saves, twice denying Rovers Billy Radley, then rebuffing John Bradley's effort from distance.

But it was the young Blues who grabbed the spoils. Brandon Scott

firing past Adam Seal from the penalty spot just before the hour mark.

Brown said: "I had a meeting with my staff on Monday and that included the academy. I put the emphasis on the onus on their toes. They should be quite proud of the fact that they've got Dan Bentley, Ted Smith and Jack Payne in the first team so the pressure is on this under-21 team to develop."

"One of them has to come out of that and play regular first team football either next season or the season after."

On further additions to his first team squad, Brown said: "I've had contact with Craig Mackail-Smith."

"I'd like to take a look at him, if you get Mackail-Smith back to the levels that he was performing at a couple of years ago then you've got a player on your hands."

"He's a bubbly effervescent type of striker, and he's always in your face, never gives defenders a second. But he broke his ankle, didn't really

come back to the levels that he had been at, but with a good pre-season, who knows?"

Rovers commercial manager John Galley said: "Commercially it was a great night of football for us, and the presence of the Blues first team with the Play-Off trophy was fantastic."

"It was a great way to bring our village together, with some great memories for the supporters."

Blues beaten at Braintree

Braintree Town 2
Southend United 1

SOUTHEND United slipped to defeat as their pre-season preparations continued at National League Premier Division outfit Braintree Town.

A first half brace from Simeon Akinola put the hosts in the driving seat. Blues new signing David Mooney halved the deficit after the break from the penalty spot, but the Iron held out for a narrow victory.

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